

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-34, 36 and 37 are pending. In the present amendment, Claim 1 is currently amended to correct a minor informality. Support for the present amendment is deemed to be evident from the original specification. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-6, 8, 10, 14, 17, and 37 were objected to; Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 10, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,541,187, hereinafter “Wang”) in view of Chou et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,656,414, hereinafter “Chou”); Claims 8, 9, 11-13, 18, 19, 36 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang in view of Chou, and further in view of Reinecke et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,716,741, hereinafter “Reinecke”); Claims 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang in view of Chou or Wang in view of Chou and Reinecke, and further in view of Roach et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,308,337, hereinafter “Roach I”); and Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang in view of Chou, and further in view of Roach et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,306,013, hereinafter “Roach II”).

Regarding the objection to the claims, Claim 1 is hereby amended to fix the typographical error noted in section 2 on page 2 of the Office Action. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the claims be withdrawn.

Turning now to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections and traverse these rejections, as discussed below.

Claim 1 recites, in part, a process of producing a resin molded product comprising “after the forming the plurality of resist layers, developing the plurality of resist layers

through solubility control in such a way that an upper resist layer has lower solubility in a developer than a lower resist layer to form the resist pattern.” It is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not disclose or suggest every feature recited in independent Claim 1.

Wang describes forming a photo resist 20j on a substrate 10j and removing part of the photo resist 20j.¹ Wang does not disclose or suggest that the photo resist 20j is made of multiple layers having different solubilities. The Office Action relies on Chou to cure this deficiency of Wang.

Chou describes a first layer 12 and a second layer 14 formed on a substrate 10 and that each of the layers 12, 14 comprises a photo-sensitive material which may be patterned by exposure to actinic radiation.² Further, as can be seen in Figure 3, Chou describes the steps of:

- (1) performing a first exposure (106) on a lower resist layer 12;
- (2) performing heat treatment (108) to render exposed portions insoluble;
- (3) performing a second exposure (110) to render portions unexposed in the first exposure developable;
- (4) forming an upper resist layer 14 (112);
- (5) performing exposure (114); and
- (6) developing the lower resist layer 12 and the upper resist layer 14 simultaneously (116);

The Office Action takes the position that the claimed solubility control is described in Chou because the lower resist layer 12 and the upper resist layer 14, which are developed simultaneously at block 116 of the flowchart shown in Fig. 3, may be developed separately.

However, it is respectfully submitted that the cited combination does not disclose or suggest “after the forming the plurality of resist layers, developing the plurality of resist layers through solubility control in such a way that an upper resist layer has lower solubility

¹ See Wang, at column 5, lines 17-40 and in Figures 21A-21E.

² See Chou, at column 6, lines 4-11 and in Figure 2.

in a developer than a lower resist layer to form the resist pattern,” as recited in amended Claim 1.

Instead, Chou only describes making a portion of the resist layer 123-125 insoluble prior to the developing. Thus, in Chou, the step of performing heat treatment on the lower resist layer 12 at the block 108 of the flowchart is not intended to control the solubility at the time of development, but to reliably render the remaining portions of the lower resist 12 insoluble.

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing, Chou fails to disclose or suggest the technical idea of controlling the solubility of the upper resist layer 12 and the lower resist layer 14 at the time of development. Thus, the claimed invention could not have been conceived by a person of ordinary skill in the art in view of the combination of Wang and Chou.

Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that the cited combination of Chou and Wang does not disclose or suggest every feature recited in independent Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claim 1, and all claims dependent thereon, as unpatentable over Wang in view of Chou be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 7, while directed to an alternative embodiment, recites features similar to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claim 7, and all claims dependent thereon, as unpatentable over Wang in view of Chou be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 8, 9, 11-13, 18, 19, 36, and 37 as unpatentable over Wang in view of Chou, and further in view of Reinecke, it is noted that Claims 8, 9, 11, 12, 18, 19, 36, and 37 depend on Claims 1 and 7, and thus are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claims 1 and 7. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Reinecke does not cure the above-noted deficiencies of Wang in view of Chou.

Regarding independent Claim 13, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 13 recites similar features to those discussed above with respect to Claims 1 and 7. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 13 also patentably defines over Wang in view of Chou, and further in view of Reinecke. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 8, 9, 11-13, 18, 19, 36, and 37 as unpatentable over Wang in view of Chou, and further in view of Reinecke be withdrawn.

Regarding the remaining rejections of Claims 5 and 14-16, it is noted that each of these claims is dependent on one of Claims 1 and 7. Thus, Claims 5 and 14-16 are believed to patentably define over the cited references for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to Claims 5 and 14-16. Further, it is respectfully submitted that neither Roach I nor Roach II cures the above-noted deficiencies of the previously discussed references. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of Claims 5 and 14-16 be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

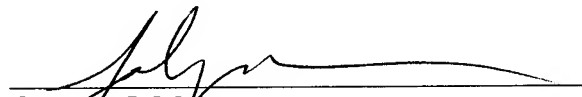
Respectfully submitted,

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